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STATE FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR, I/GNEA, B/BXN,  
B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN  
USAID/ANE/MEA  
LONDON FOR TSOU  
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SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION: RESOLUTION OF SUCCESSION ISSUE

Selected Headlines

11. Tuesday, 24 January 2006

-- Al-Qabas front page "Salem Al-Ali to Kuwaitis: Sabah Al-Ahmad is our Amir"; "Shaykh Saad steps down today in a statement to the nation"; "Government withdraws request for 'stepping down' session"; "Council of Ministers nominates Shaykh Sabah as Amir in 8 days"; "At 2300, Kuwait breathed sigh of relief and Kuwaitis exchanged congratulations. Crisis was over with the meeting between Sabah Al-Ahmad and Salem Al-Ali"; "Under agreement, Amir abdicates in favor of Sabah Al-Ahmad, who will become the 15th ruler"; "Intensive contacts, consultations and meetings with the two icons"; "Shaykh Fahd Al-Salem to Sabah Al-Ahmad: My father wants to see you or come to you"; "Shaykh Salem: I met my brother Sabah Al-Ahmad"; "Shaykh Salem: Sabah Al-Ahmad will go with me to his brother Shaykh Saad at Al-Shaab Palace this morning, Tuesday"; "Shaykh Salem Al-Ali: Shaykh Saad wants to relax"; "Shaykh Salem" I never had 'ruling' ambitions"; "A statement will be issued today (Tuesday) indicating end of standoff"; "Sabah Al-Ahmad had sent a letter to Speaker Al-Khorafi to hold a session. A letter was being prepared to be delivered by Sabah Al-Ahmad at the session"; "Al-Khorafi received a new letter from Amir seeking another oath-taking session"; "The meeting between Salem Al-Ali and Sabah Al-Ahmad took half an hour"; "Salem Al-Ali: Agreement reached because Kuwait's interest is above all other considerations"; Agreement was unconditional. Shaykh Sabah will visit Al-Shaab Palace this morning and will take pictures with Shaykhs Saad and Salem before the abdication letter is read"; "Ahmad Al-Fahd and Ali Al-Salem attended meeting of Sabah Al-Ahmad and Salem Al-Ali"

-- Al-Qabas p. 4 "NGOs concerned over aggravation of standoff"; "A number of Kuwaiti women call for wisdom"

-- Al-Qabas p. 8 "Government has Amiri powers"; "Al-Khorafi: New session for nomination after ending morning session"

-- Al-Qabas p. 10 "Ruling family icons met at Dar Salwa. Sabah Al-Ahmad posted them on developments"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam front page "Good Morning...Oh Amir"; "Marathon Kuwaiti breath-taking day ended with agreement of royal family icons on abdication by Shaykh Saad due to health conditions"; "No session after abdication procedures"; "Marches of joy"; "Darkest hours of the day are before dawn. Political crisis was over last night. Amir will abdicate this morning in favor of Sabah Al-Ahmad. Agreement on this formula reached between Salem Al-Ali and Sabah Al-Ahmad in the presence of Ahmad Al-Fahd and Ali Salem Al-Ali"

-- Al-Arabiya satellite television channel "Amir will sign letter of abdication at 0900 this morning, one hour before the parliamentary session which was scheduled to activate article 3 of the succession law that was requested by the government. Letters will be sent this morning by both the Amir and Shaykh Sabah to the National Assembly"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam front page "Hamad Jaber Al-Ali delivered a letter to Speaker to bring forward oath-taking session to Monday"; "Independent MPs Bloc supports steps taken by Council of Ministers"; "Prime Minister's Diwan issues a statement"; "After meeting of royal family members, Council of Ministers held a meeting"; "All parliamentary blocs with the exception of the Popular Action Bloc had a clear position"; "Delegations received by Salem Al-Ali yesterday";

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 2 "Tough parliamentary day. Morning session for relief of post and evening session for oath-taking. Speaker dealt with both requests pursuant to the constitution"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 3 "MPs: No one can deny role of Shaykh Saad"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 4 "Al-Qallaf: I believe Sabah Al-Ahmad is the Amir of the country"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 5 "Al-Khorafi: Short time behind turning down request by Amir to bring forward date for oath-taking session"; "Al-Sager: Merging two sessions cannot be made"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 6 "Al-Tabtabaei urged Shaykh Saad for 'initiative': Abdication for the sake of Kuwait's interest"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 8 "Royal family icons were sorry for failure to reach settlement and were for today's morning closed-door session"

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-- Al-Watan front page "Khalifa Ali Al-Khalifa: Thanks to both Shaykh Saad and Shaykh Sabah"; "Nabil Al-Fadhil: Wisdom of the royal family triumphed"; "Senior royal family icons did not disappoint the Kuwaitis"; "This morning will witness a new consultative meeting between Sabah Al-Ahmad and Salem Al-Ali"; "Government will ask the National Assembly to revoke today's sessions. Today will witness a meeting of the royal family members in which Shaykh Saad will hand over abdication letter to Sabah Al-Ahmad"; "Al-Mqate: Accepting abdication and appointment of Amir can be conducted in one session"; "Al-Watan commends Al-Khorafi"

-- Al-Watan p. 18 "Majority of MPs are for resorting to voting to address the situation"; "Hussein Al-Qallaf: We should not flatter or be courteous when it comes to Kuwait's interests"; "Al-Qallaf: Initiative to boycott both sessions failed"; "Failure to collect signatures to bring forward oath-taking session"; "MPs: Council of Ministers is sure about necessary number of votes"

-- Al-Watan p. 19 "Al-Tabtabaei backs down from the idea of boycotting sessions"

-- Al-Watan p. 54 "Bomb Disposal Squad combed National Assembly"

-- Al-Seyassah front page "Standoff defused. Extraordinary evening session between the two senior most members of the royal family ended the ruling house arrangement standoff"; "Saad Al-Abdulla abdicated and Sabah Al-Ahmad Amir"; "Statement of abdication will be announced at 0900 this morning and pledge of allegiance at Dar Salwa"; "Cancellation of 'relief of post' session and agreement between Sabah Al-Ahmad and Salem Al-Ali was unconditional"; "Sabah Al-Ahmad met Al-Khorafi in the evening to prepare for the constitutional oath-taking session"; "Al-Sager: It is not easy for us to relieve 'liberation hero' from his post"; "Al-Qallaf: There are people who act in a way which is not in favour of Kuwait's interests"; "Country's notables met Salem Al-Ali"; "Popular Action Bloc sought one month postponement"; "Strict security measures around the National Assembly"; "Amir hands over abdication letter to heads of both authorities"; "Half an hour closed-door session"

-- Al-Seyassah p. 9 "Ali Al-Rashed: I always have asked for activation of the succession law"

-- Al-Seyassah p. 11 "Al-Qallaf: Shaykh Saad should be kept away from defamation"

-- Al-Anbaa front page "Kuwait's Saad has preserved Kuwait and abdicates in favour of Sabah Al-Ahmad"; "Al-Anbaa applauds Amir of Kuwait"; "Council of Ministers will name Sabah Al-Ahmad as Amir and will ask the parliament to hold oath-taking session"

13. Wednesday, 25 January 2006

-- Al-Qabas front page "Council of Minister names Sabah Al-Ahmad 15th Amir of Kuwait"; "Oath-taking session Sunday or Monday"; "National Assembly unanimously relieved Shaykh Saad of his post"; "Obstructions by Shaykha Latifa delayed accomplishment of agreement"; "Sabah Al-Ahmad was named Amir without being present in the meeting"; "Speaker Al-Khorafi applauded naming Sabah Al-Ahmad as Amir"; "Sabah Al-Ahmad briefed MPs on contents of Shaykh Salem Al-Ali's letter"; "The health report was signed by two physicians"; "'Transference of prerogatives' was the term chosen"

-- Al-Qabas p. 3 "Statement by Speaker Al-Khorafi on developments of yesterday's National Assembly session"

-- Al-Qabas p. 4 "Sabah Al-Ahmad: That we resorted to using article 3 of the succession law was for the interest of Kuwait"

-- Al-Qabas p. 5 "Al-Khorafi: Sabah Al-Ahmad is the best successor for the best predecessor"

-- Al-Qabas p. 8 "Details of the closed-door session: More than one attempt to settle matters before voting"

-- Al-Qabas p. 10 "Kuwaitis satisfied with defusion of standoff"

-- Al-Qabas p. 12 "New Amir welcomed by Kuwaiti personalities and NGOs"

-- Al-Qabas p. 29 "Kuwait bourse surges by 289 points"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam front page "Day of surprises"

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-- Al-Rai Al-Aam front page "News Agencies: This is the first time a ruler is relieved of his post in the Gulf region by constitutional means"; "News Agencies: This is the first time a ruler is relieved of his post in the Gulf region by constitutional means"; page "Sabah Al-Ahmad thanks Al-Khorafi for not distributing the medical report"; "Endorsement by Salem Al-Ali"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 3 "Al-Saadoun objected to including the letter of abdication by the Amir in the minutes of the meeting"; "Al-Zalzala, Al-Omar, Al-Roumi and Al-Saadoun talked in the session"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 6 "Al-Khorafi: We never had a standoff. Kuwait has won a shrewd and smart Amir"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 35 "Minister Sharar: Oath-taking session on Monday or Tuesday"; "Dr. Bader Al-Nashi: National Assembly witnessed a historic event yesterday"

-- Al-Watan front page "Sabah IV"; "Delay of receipt of letter of abdication prompted both authorities to vote on relieving Amir of post"; "Sabah Al-Ahmad: We recall exemplary history of Shaykh Saad"; "Oh Saad of Kuwait, Sabah Al-Ahmad will maintain your dignity"; "Shaykh Nawaf Al-Ahmad enters Monday session as acting Prime Minister"; "Amir only needs 33 votes for endorsement and confirmation"; "Dr. Al-Mqate: This is not the first time a prime minister is named Amir"

-- Al-Watan p. 5 "Dr. Shafeeq Al-Ghabra: Kuwait will come out of this constitutional standoff stronger"; "Dr. Ahmad Al-Rubei: Current

situation boosts the State of constitution"

-- Al-Watan p. 20 "Political Science Professors: Unique model for democracy in Kuwait"

-- Al-Watan p. 59 "Dramatic moments witnessed by the National Assembly yesterday"

-- Al-Seyassah front page "Shaykha Latifa's conditions for handing over letter of abdication"; "Letter of abdication was late"; "Oath-taking session on Monday"; "Letter of abdication did not include any terms"; "Al-Adwa: Some were trying to square accounts"; "Al-Rashed: We have exhausted all chances"

Block Quotes

14. Wednesday, 25 January 2006

-- Al-Qabas staff wrote on the front page under the title "For Kuwait's government, people, and organizations": "The heart of Kuwaitis began to feel tranquillity once again yesterday after the nomination of His Highness Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed as Amir. We thank all those who played a part in the resolution of this crisis for the sake of Kuwait's interest. We all know His Highness the Amir Shaykh Saad had no direct connection to this.... What Shaykh Saad did for Kuwait has entered history books and settled in the hearts of Kuwaitis. His physical inability to carry out his responsibilities in no way lessened his place.... What the National Council did had to do with saving legitimacy through resorting to the constitution. The constitution is the first and last organizational tool for our political life and it has just proven once again that it is the first line of defense. Adhering to the constitution means maintaining legitimacy, maintaining a balance between organizations, and the good of Kuwait...all of Kuwait."

-- Iqbal Ahmed wrote for the progressive daily Al-Qabas under the title "The hardest moments changed history": "A 180 degree change in the political scene of any state is inconceivable to many people.... The instability that ensued especially during the last two days and not having seen a single tank on the streets in preparation for a state of emergency or in order to take advantage of the situation is reason for us to raise our heads high before the world. Despite the hard times that we have endured a strong entity such as Kuwait is ruled by the love of the ruled for the ruler and vice versa. That love answers any questions that an outsider may have about Kuwaiti politics. The few minutes that stood between the Amir's abdication of his own accord and being abdicated were by far the most difficult."

-- Dr. Ahmed Al-Rabei also wrote for the progressive daily Al-Qabas under the title "Crisis... behind us": "Kuwaiti society succeeded in

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resolving the crisis with transparency, adherence to the rule of law and the constitution, and the wisdom of the ruling family. Saad Al-Abdullah, a generous man who served his people and his country during their darkest hours, will remain in our minds and hearts. What is important is the future under the new leadership.... The new leadership takes the helm at a good time, one of unprecedented financial surplus, a new generation of educated cadre, a regional stability that we have not seen since the establishment of Kuwait, an active private sector, security agreements with the major powers, and stability on the domestic front. We came out of this crisis stronger and now we need to plan for the future."

-- Jassem Boodai editor-in-chief of the Moderate daily Al-Rai Al-Aam wrote under the title "Saad of the Emirate and of leadership": "No matter what happens we can say that His Highness Shaykh Saad Al-Abdullah ascended from being Amir to being a leader for all of Kuwait. He won himself a new place in the love of Kuwaitis and in their appreciation for him. Saad Al-Abdullah will remain a leader in the hearts of all Kuwaitis. His place high and his history appreciated and kept. The testimony of his lifetime companion Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed is enough. But we must say God forgive the fools who tried to offend the history and image of this man by attempting to

put their personal interests before those of Kuwait. And God forgive some of those close to him who tried to break him after all the challenges that he faced could not."

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